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and as often as not betrayed by it. In the end all collapses. The maddened Mouret sets fire to his home and perishes in the fianies with Abb6 Fatijas, >vhile Marthe dies of a disorder springing from her inherited hysteria.

Then, the middle class of the provinces having sketched, that of the metropolis is depicted with unsparan ing hand. The career of the Mourets' eldest, Octave, followed, first through the pages of " Pot-Bonille (VII). which he appears as a kind of modern Don Juan, Don Juan stripped of all poetry, all glamour, a sensualist our great cities, the man who prowls, not among unhappy creatures of the streets, but among the women outward respectability who may help him to acquire position fortune. The scene is laid in a house of the Choiseul, in the centre of Paris; and all gravitate depraved, . • venal, egotistical, and sickly beings, adulterous households, unscrupulous matchmaking mothers. demi-vierges who will only marry for money, dowry slatternly servant girls, and that type of the middle-class debauchee who makes those girls his prey. And the pleasing figures in the work are few-poor old Josserand, instance, and the charming Madame HMouin, prosperous author on the first floor, who drives

in Ms carriage and has two handsome children. At the

time

same

the book pours a stream of light first on all the ignoble sMfts to which middle-class folk of small means their insane endeavours to ape their wealthier neighbours, and secondly on the evils that arise from that dowry system which superficial people regard as proving the foresight and wisdom of the Trench when they embark on the sea of matrimony. fact, it As matter of frequently happens